

The COMMONWEAL

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France and French Colonies

CONTINENTAL FRANCE occupied by the German army, by the German police, its ports bombed by the British, awaits in a nightmare of uncertainty the verdict of history. Necessarily the action of its Government is futile, the sentiment of its people nourished in the provisional. Men and women ask only the elementary questions. Have we a home left and is it possible to secure permission to re-enter it? Is it possible to reunite the dispersed members of our family? Where are the men who are prisoners? Can we find again the work we left and return to it? Will we be punished for what we thought and said, for what we think and say? That is all—simple thoughts of family, of security from hunger, of hope and of fear—all, except for introspection. Somewhat as people argue in a dream, the Government continues to prepare the Riom "responsibility" trial. They have sent Léon Blum to join in prison Mandel, who hates him, Daladier who overthrew him, Reynaud who overthrew Daladier, and Gamelin, the general, who is finding that to fail is a crime—all of them captives of the captive Government of a captive people.

As we pointed out two weeks ago the situation of the French colonies differs essentially from

that of France. The people who live in them share the French defeat, but only technically. They still have their homes, they still work for themselves: the German occupation of their soil is only by proxy, German control of its produce is asserted only indirectly through the French Government. Their liberty is still something to create or surrender. This freedom of choice was realized first by the distant colonies; it is now realized, more importantly, nearer home. News comes of rioting in French Morocco. If de Gaulle supporters who refuse to enter the German system until forced to do so succeed in creating nothing greater than confusion, this will mean that colonial supplies will cease to go to France and from France to Germany. The blockade of the continent will be aggravated. The Germans have the keys to the colonial wealth of France but the colonials are finding out that the locks can be jammed. The Germans can break in? They have to cross the seas to do so.

There are narrower seas they have failed so far to cross: the spectacle of British courage is what all men's eyes are set upon; the rhythm of Churchill's speech what all men hear. The entire world waits upon the result of the Battle of Britain for it knows that the future order of the world is incidental to it. And in all Europe and throughout the world, and here in America, there are men whose heart, too, is engaged.

The First United States Peacetime Draft

IN THE past few months among the editors and among the contributing editors of THE COMMONWEAL, as indicated in these pages, there have been differences on the wisdom of peacetime conscription. Some of us have indicated opposition on the grounds that the situation did not call for so large an addition to our armed forces—where, for instance, would be a feasible battlefield? Congress and the President and a large part of the American people think otherwise and after three months of hearings and discussions conscription has now become a law. The decision to draft some 800,000 or 900,000 men from 21 to 35 in the next few months has been reached by constitutional, democratic methods. Conscription is now the law of the land, and in its final form the Burke-Wadsworth Act has much to commend it. If it goes no further, if it leads to no other warlike steps, it will serve as a warning to aggressors; and that warning itself is a measure of defense. Its provisions are characterized by a spirit of fairness and the assumption of commensurate national sharing in the burden of defense. The allowances made for personal responsibilities and the assurance provided that jobs in private industry must be restored at the com-

pletion of the twelve-months training period are characteristic of the act. Much will depend, however, on the way the provisions are carried out. This is especially true of the clauses referring to conscientious objectors, who are recognized as such and exempted only if they establish, it would seem, that they are "absolute pacifists." Appeals can be made from local decisions and much will depend on the personnel of the reviewing board. In a world which seems given over to force alone, those who sincerely believe that there is a better, a higher way, than fighting fire with fire and are willing to suffer for that belief should be treated with the utmost respect.

E. S. S.

The Logic of Willkie's Campaign

DEMOCRATIC Chairman Flynn accuses Willkie of being an "amateur." For ourselves, and

Very
Slow

we think for most of the country, the realization of the change in "politics" since 1929 is usually most imperfect. Roosevelt and the New Deal are modern, streamline governing outfits, representative of a different era of human affairs and a different category of political action than the country is accustomed to, and one in which their opponents lack experience and competence. Willkie is on the defensive, losing ground in the Gallup poll, piling up odds against himself in the betting tips even of Republican party papers, scattering his counter-attack and miffing issues, "mis-speaking" the appeasement debate, failing to find a line and hold to it. The logic of his campaign seems too cerebral and architectonic, and "bad politics." At Coffeyville he seemed to want to lay a foundation, to build from the ground up and treat first things first, but the Democrats are not likely to debate with him the issue of democratic philosophy. Rather, Cordell Hull, with all the prestige of his person and office, sends out through the regular U. S. Department of State press service a statement about telephones: "The assertions which Mr. Willkie made are untrue and make it evident he is grossly ignorant of the history of the last few years. The President has never communicated by telephone with either Premier Mussolini or Chancellor Hitler. . . ." At Coffeyville Willkie made several other points: A democratic government is possible and right only for a certain and high type of citizen; with a population of gangsters, a different, more primitive form of government would be correct and necessary. Willkie charged that the New Deal has a cynical lack of faith in the people which is exemplified by Roosevelt "subterfuges," e.g., the armament speech after Belgium and Holland were invaded, telling about American arms "on hand and on order"; the third term reluctant "draft"; not making a campaign. Willkie charged that because of this viewpoint toward the people,

the New Deal takes responsibility from them and forges that responsibility into a privately possessed and proto-totalitarian power. There were many other criticisms which the Democrats do not meet nor, apparently, worry about. Perhaps if Willkie gets no further, the New Deal will have further justification for its alleged cynicism toward the people. But the Republicans can hardly be considered to have given the people a fair test as yet. What line of action are Republicans proposing? Negative criticism from both sides is simply devastating, but the constructive suggestions are far between. In ordinary "political" maneuver and exchange, it looks as though the incumbents have it over them like a tent. P. B.

Germany's Bishops

TOWARD the end of August there was expectation that the German hierarchy, meeting at Fulda,

What
Goes On?

would issue some statement on the war and on the duties of German Catholics with regard to it. It was also to be expected that such a statement would call for loyalty to the existing régime, insofar as the war is concerned. Ever since the emergence of today's nationalism, bishops on both sides in time of war have called upon their flocks to support their national governments. That has been the ransom exacted of the Church by nationalism, and it is a ransom which includes the giving of scandal to all men who are temperamentally opposed to the spirit of compromise.

This year's Fulda meeting was conducted in the utmost secrecy. The only German report on the subject emanated from DNB, the official agency, and alleged that at the end of the war a pastoral formulated at this meeting would be read in all churches. DNB says that this pastoral includes a "solemn pledge of loyalty to Chancellor Hitler." It further states that the prevailing view at the conference was: "The Catholic Church in Germany is indebted to German troops for the victorious advance and defense of the German homeland. Without the successful warding off of enemy invasion by German armed forces, German Catholics could not have pursued so undisturbed and quietly their church work and ministerial offices."

Next we have a categorical denial from the National Catholic Welfare Conference news service, dated at Geneva, Switzerland. It is couched in very general terms. "In declaring that these statements should be fully discounted, persons here point out that all participants in the Bishops' meeting were pledged to the strictest secrecy, and that absolutely no public announcement has been made on decisions reached. . . . Furthermore, it is learned reliably that the Holy Father addressed a letter to the meeting the tenor of which pre-

cluded entirely any such resolution as the interested sources now intimate was passed. . . . Beyond this it is also reliably known that the German hierarchy was not at all in a mood to create the impression that present conditions are satisfactory to them."

A week or so later the Columbia Broadcasting Company's short wave listening station picked up and made public a statement by a Vatican announcer on the condition of Catholic education in Germany: "Contrary to this clear and explicit provision of the concordat, contrary to the overwhelming desire of Catholic parents, contrary to the counsel of the best State lawyers . . . today practically all Catholic elementary schools have been turned into common schools—that is to say into schools where all the youth are to be formed and educated according to the principles of nazism."

On the same day (September 16) a New York Times dispatch from Rome reported that the Vatican had forbidden the publication of the pastoral letter written by the German bishops and submitted for Rome's approval. "It was pointed out that the Vatican thought it was better to avoid any official pronouncement until the end of the war, which presumably will permit the Vatican to ascertain the attitude of the German Government toward Catholicism in general and German Catholics in particular."

On Door-Step, If Not Lap

NOW THE papers here and in Mexico report that Avila Camacho, the PRN-Cardenas president designate of Mexico, is going to visit the United States and probably Washington itself. Already his opponent, Andreu Almazan, has toured the country and issued a triumphal challenge from New York. Both sides seem to be putting responsibility for deciding who will be next president of Mexico squarely up to the government and governing powers of the United States. And it does seem to be an inescapable fact that there is no use at all to refer the question of who ought to succeed Cardenas to the Mexican election. One constantly hears that the United States really underneath it all decides what group shall have the power in our neighbors' land. Just how does the United States exert all this pressure? Anyone can gather reports and rumors and can speculate about methods. In any case, it would be hard to dispute that the United States could, if it tried, determine without much fuss the succession of power there to the South, and the Mexican leaders seem to expect just that this year. Furthermore, it appears inevitable for the United States to limit the free sovereignty of Mexico by its very existence as an overwhelmingly large, populous and industrialized

nation next door. But there is no need for the United States to exploit its neighbor, and every reason for the United States to seek the internal peace and prosperity and liberty of Mexico. Circumstances link the two nations closely and more closely, and we should try to make it a link of collaboration and reciprocal, or even common, benefit. It is useless not to see what is going on and to let our impress on Mexico be secret and irresponsible. The conscience knows, and so do the people of Latin America. American policy toward Mexico is a public issue and should be publicly determined.

"How Can a Guy Forget?"

A GRANT from the Carnegie Corporation has made possible the undertaking of a new magazine with an idea that is exciting in itself and promises to be well carried out by an able editor. The first issue of the quarterly *Common Ground*, under the editorship of Louis

Adamic, has just appeared; it includes articles by Mary Ellen Chase, Van Wyck Brooks, A. M. Schlesinger, George S. Schuyler, Robert M. Hutchins, Adamic himself and others. The cause to which all these dedicate themselves is that of creating a sound American unity and mutual understanding among the diverse ethnic or national groups that constitute our mixed population. If this were to mean a repetition of the crude and desolating "Americanization" drives of World War days, then it would be a bad cause. But of such a group of people one could expect nothing so crass, and especially of Louis Adamic. His analysis of the situation is acute: "Briefly, our weakness lies in a kind of psychological civil war, which is being waged among groups of various backgrounds within our population; our strength in the emotions, motives, and impulses that have brought us here, or most of us, in the past three centuries. . . . Our problem is to stop the psychological civil war and begin to draw on the inner power of the story of this country. . . ." All this he would effect by education, by encouraging the establishment of a greater number of neighborhood councils, designed to smooth out the minor irritations which do so much to promote psychological civil war, by furthering "an appreciation of what each group has contributed to America, to uphold the freedom to be different, and to encourage the growth of an American culture which will be truly representative of all the elements that make up the American people." One must remember: Old-stock Americans are as much in the melting-pot as those who come of other traditions. An Armenian contributor sums it up: "I'm an American citizen, sincerely attached to the Constitution, and I'll fight for America any time; but I ask you, how can a guy forget his childhood?"

*Common
Ground*

*Mexican
Election*

Saint Ignatius as a Social Worker

The Jesuit founder as "servant of the weak, succor of the poor, deliverer of souls" is largely unknown.

By Joseph H. Fichter

THE FAME of Ignatius Loyola as a religious reformer, as one of the outstanding figures in the counter-Reformation of the sixteenth century, is so securely entrenched that it needs no modern defense. But the very force of that fame has obscured his title to having been something of a social reformer as well. As Papini has said, he is a saint whom many admire but few love. He is thought of as the iron-minded heresy router, and seldom as the "servant of the weak, the succor of the poor and the deliverer of souls."

A man who has had his finger in multiple activities is certain to appear as a distorted character in the hindsight of history. For some unknown reason, the lovable and tender characteristics of Ignatius Loyola have been limned into his portrait only in slight, shadowy lines. For almost two decades of his saintly vagabondage (1521-1540), he was as much a social worker and reformer as he was a student and spiritual guide. "From the time of his flight to Manresa," wrote Papini, "he devoted himself to the care of bodies in hospitals and to the care of souls in city streets and in all the haunts of men, whether in hovels or on ships. He lived on charity, but he always distributed again to the poor the greater part of what he had been given for himself. Sometimes, when he was alone in strange countries, he was known to give away all he had about him, and once he even undertook a long and arduous journey on foot to assist a companion who had robbed him of all that little money which he had collected for his studies."

Practically everywhere he went in those years the saint lodged at hospitals, and the first thing he did upon arrival was to help take care of the sick and to beg for the poor. In 1522 his intention was to leave from Barcelona on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, but a plague closed the harbor, and he stayed over at Manresa for many months. Here he became convinced that his conquest of the heights of sanctity could not be better advanced than through a charitable attendance upon the plague victims. Opportunity for divine heroism, if he wished it, was at hand all about him. While reading the "Flos Sanctorum" on his sick bed at the Loyola castle he had dreamed of just such saintly deeds.

For the first time in his life the former elegant consorted with the victims of a pestilential disease.

The stench of dying flesh was in his nostrils from morning to night; he volunteered to assist the nurses in the worst cases.

Determinations to sanctity without corresponding actions are futile. At the hospital of Manresa there was opportunity for any saint to put into effect the former resolutions. The very vocation Loyola had chosen demanded that he should love suffering in himself, and alleviate suffering in the bodies of his fellow men. Through the narrow alleys of the town he begged food, clothing and medicine for the sick. On his shoulders he carried the worst cases to the hospital and there took a personal interest in their welfare, caring for them until they recovered, burying their bodies when they died.

David Douglas in his contribution to Eyre's classic volumes on European civilization says that "the later hospital system was improved in very many ways, but it was, nevertheless, institutionally a direct outgrowth of that of the Middle Ages... it is necessary to bear in mind also the advances made during the period which prepared the way for later progress in medical theory and practice." Now we cannot pretend that Ignatius Loyola was ahead of his time in the care of the sick. He put himself under the direction of the authorities in the hospitals and made the same bungling mistakes that they made. Their alleged medical knowledge was the outcome of clever guesswork; and the guesses were sometimes good and sometimes fatal. But none can gainsay the superior spirit urging them on.

After the pilgrimage

When he returned to Barcelona from the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, he started to study Latin grammar as an ordinary schoolboy, even though he was by this time thirty-one years old. But on the side he found time to check bawdry at a convent of the town, and to set up a kind of soup-kitchen for the poor. He knocked at the doors of the wealthy and noble families, and it was really no problem for him to obtain these requisites. It speaks well for the higher stratum of Barcelona society that its members searched out and sensed the unusual in sanctity. This Christian predilection of Catholic Spain may explain why Spaniards have been fooled so frequently by pseudo-mystics

and self-confessed fakirs, but being deceived in this way is rather a virtue than a vice.

At the home of Innez Pascual, where he lived, Ignatius rigged up a kind of relief station, visited daily by a breadline of men, women and children. To them he distributed the food, clothes and alms he had collected, after putting aside the choicest things for the sick in the hospitals. His landlady took an enthusiastic part in the work, acting as the saint's treasurer and as a sort of policewoman when the crowds gathered closely around her house. But there were also people who were ashamed of their poverty and who would not crowd around the place. Ignatius went to a great deal of trouble to hunt them out at night and to supply their needs under cover of darkness.

There was practically no angle of social reform which he did not put a hand to during these years at Barcelona. Study and prayer were always the principal pursuits of his day, but there were hours in which he could devote himself to the catechizing of children, cheering the sick, reconciling enemies, and even exhorting bawds to renounce their ancient trade.

But the work at Barcelona was not permanent, and your confirmed social reformer demands that such things should last long afterwards. The experience, however, was a permanent factor in Saint Ignatius's character, for it helped him later to establish a lasting reform of beggary in his native Azpeitia, and to assist the hungry in the severe Roman winters of 1539 and 1540. Furthermore, the permanence of this idea of physical assistance and social reform has carried on through the four centuries of Jesuit existence in the outstanding work of men like Francis Xavier, John Francis Regis, Peter Claver, of movements like the Paraguay Reductions and the present Labor Schools.

In 1535 Loyola returned to Azpeitia for a brief summer visit and for the purpose of regaining his health, weakened by the rigors of Parisian study. There he lived at the hospital of St. Madalena, and refused to stay at the family castle. But through his nephew, a local priest, he was able to have certain ordinances promulgated for a kind of organized and supervised charity. The idea behind this particular social reform seems to have been born in his mind at Barcelona, Alcala, Paris and other places, where he had seen the effect of aimless begging.

The annals of the hospital of St. Martin in Guipuzco declared that "this holy man who continually meditates on the Holy Scriptures, worked zealously and purposively so that the really needy people of the country, who suffer from hunger and other numerous necessities, should be efficaciously assisted. He took up this affair with the city council and the principal inhabitants and made regulations and ordinances. . . ."

These regulations clearly demonstrate that the social-minded saint had no love of poverty for its own sake. In his own personal life he advocated and practiced poverty as a means, not as an end, because for him it was the most direct route to God in that it relieved him of the worry of worldly possessions. But in his beggary he was thinking always of the needs of other men, trying to lift them out of that soul-searing and degrading penury which is as unnecessary as it is distasteful to the general run of mankind.

Mendicancy

Loyola decided that mendicancy in the Basque province must be brought under control, and he set up a relief headquarters at one of the hospitals. Officials appointed for the work collected the necessary money at the door of the church on Sundays and feast days. Anyone caught begging from door to door in the residences or shops of the town would be imprisoned for six days on the first offense and given fifty lashes on the second. Able-bodied beggars refusing to work would receive both the jail sentence and the public whipping. Pilgrims passing through town got help only from the relief headquarters, not from individuals.

It is a paradox only in the minds of the undiscerning that Saint Ignatius, who had been begging his way all over Europe, should be the author of such restrictive legislation. But the very experience he had in his own vagrancy served as a guiding motive in the codex. If the systematic relief which he devised had been in effect all over Europe, there would have been no necessity for individual begging. According to the Ignatian point of view it is the duty of every Christian to provide for the poor, and he had himself used the greater percentage of his collections for others. Able-bodied men would then be official collectors of alms, and there would be no question of able-bodied men seeking money without working for it, unless they were congenital vagrants.

Of course, the observer of medieval mendicancy must not overlook the fact that begging was a practical means of learning the virtue of humility. The voluntary beggar, besides cutting himself off from wealth, knew also that he should occasionally have the opportunity of receiving the insults and reproaches of more well-to-do people. Both at Alcala and at Barcelona the saint had been condemned for his beggary. Yet the thing can become a burden on society when it is overdone, as it was by the great hordes of mendicant friars who cluttered the roads and inns of Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

From his home town Saint Ignatius went to Venice, where he met his former companions from Paris, and where they all divided the work of the two hospitals between them. From the memoirs left by Rodriguez, one of their number,

it is clear that their work for the sick was little better organized, yet a great deal more efficient, than the saint's previous efforts had been. They knew somewhat better how to go about the business of succoring the sick. Certainly they were never squeamish about mixing intimately with the leprous and scabby patients.

A year later they were in Rome, with their own house on the Pincian Hill, which Rodriguez declares was in such bad shape that no one would live in it before they took it over. Pastor synthesizes the charitable heroism of Ignatius and his companions when he says that "The winters of 1538 and 1539 were marked by the severity of the cold and the scarcity of food, and people lay in the open street stark and half dead. Towards evening the fathers went their rounds, gathered the unfortunates in groups, and took them to the roomy chambers of the Frangipani dwelling-house; there they distributed bread which they had begged, spread out beds of straw, and gave instructions in the faith and prayed; sometimes from 200 to 400 persons were thus tended."

This example of generous poor relief spread like wildfire through Rome. The cardinals, city officials and nobles took a personal interest in the work, contributed large sums to it and to the other hospitals of the city. Thus, practically single-handed, Ignatius Loyola was responsible for averting the human toll of a Roman winter famine. A certain Peter Codacio was so touched by this Christlike program that he provided for the material wants of the companions, and obtained for them their first church, Our Lady of the Wayside. Some years later he attached himself permanently to the group and became a Jesuit after the Society was founded.

After he became the first General of the Society

of Jesus, Saint Ignatius was in a position to extend even further his field of social reform. One of the tests prescribed for novices was a thirty-day period of work in the hospitals of Rome. With his companions he took part in the establishing of an orphanage for boys and another for girls. His persistence in forming the house of Sta. Marta for reformed prostitutes brought him years of opposition from the lower elements of Rome, but eventual recognition and support from officials and nobles.

Perhaps the most interesting social work, from a strictly modern point of view, was his assistance of the Jews. Many of these were afraid to become Christians because their property might be taken from them. Ignatius got a brief from the Pope in 1542 assuring the Jews of immunity. Stewart Rose remarked that "the Jews' House began through the compassion Ignatius felt for some converts who had been expelled from their families, and whom he took to live with him, till the number became inconvenient." Less than three years later a half-hundred Jews, Moors and Turks had been converted, and the good movement thus propelled was taken on by others, and spread for many years.

The details of Ignatian capacity and energy for the comfort of the bodies of others did not come from an egoistic mania for social reform as such. Any one who is half a Catholic realizes that the removal of prostitutes, the care of children, the cure of the sick, all the corporal works of mercy, are not ends in themselves. They are a means of loving God, a means of bringing human beings to His all-healing embrace. But he knows, as Ignatius did, that the corporal works of mercy are the criterion upon which Christ will judge all at the last day.

Living in Harlem

What are the physical conditions
of the world's largest Negro city?

By Ellen Tarry

IF OUR LORD came to Harlem and held a mass meeting to determine the responsibility for the manner in which 250,000 of His black children are crowded into an area of 203 city blocks, upon whom do you think the blame would rest? Writers all over the country, in periodicals of every description, seem to have agreed that the housing conditions existing among the Negroes of Harlem are disgraceful. Yet our rents are still, proportionately, too high; colored

people are still living in improperly ventilated buildings, without adequate sanitary conveniences; landlords still "jump" rentals when Negro tenants move into a building previously occupied by whites; and we are still existing much as we were when, years past, articles of protest started to appear against Harlem's slums.

If the blame for these conditions could be pinned on any one group, we could hope for an early solution. But you can't blame the colored

people for being poor and having large families, thereby being compelled to occupy sections where rents fit their pocket books. Neither can you blame the white people for owning most of the houses in which the colored people are forced to live.

After being a part of Harlem for ten years, reading articles, books, charts and reports by the various committees on housing, and pondering this problem, I have reached the conclusion that the lack of understanding of the true brotherhood of man in Christ is, as elsewhere, the basic factor in Harlem's housing problem.

A case

Here is a case that seems clearly to demonstrate this. An investigator for a certain charitable organization called at the home of an unfortunate Negro woman to whom the organization was giving aid. The investigator was surprised to find that half of the roof of the building in which this woman lived had been destroyed by fire. Even as the young man entered the building, a slight flurry of snow began falling.

"Snow today," he mused, "and we had rain on yesterday. I wonder when this fire took place?"

Climbing the steps to the client's top-floor apartment, the investigator became worried when he noticed the snow falling on the steps. As he reached the top floor, the young white man knocked at his client's door. A weak voice asked who he was, then called, "Come in."

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Blank," he said. "You're in bed, so I suppose you're ill."

"Yes, sir," the woman answered in a hoarse voice, "it's been so damp here I caught a cold and it looks like I'm getting the flu or something. But I took some medicine and I guess I'll be all right."

The investigator knew, from the woman's case history, that she'd been ill of pneumonia the winter before. And he also knew that he would immediately call the organization's doctor to look after the woman, but he was curious to know if his hunch as to the cause of this woman's illness was correct.

"I see you had a fire here," he said, making a few notes in his case book.

"Yes, sir," the woman answered.

"When did it happen?"

"Three days ago."

"Do you mean to tell me that you people have been living in this house with half of the roof burned off and no protection from the weather for three days?" the investigator asked. "Didn't you speak to your landlord and ask him to put some sort of covering over the place?"

"Yesterday, when my girl came in from school," the woman answered, "she said it was drizzling and I told her to go and ask the landlord if he would put up something to keep out the rain, be-

cause my throat was sore then. But he told her that he had to wait until the insurance man, or somebody, came and looked the place over."

"That was yesterday, but I'm going to find him today," the young man decided, "and see what he's waiting on now! Where is he?"

"You can see the janitor—he's in the basement—and he'll tell you where you can find the landlord. His office is somewhere uptown, but he's usually around here this time of the day."

"Very well. I'll find him—wherever he is. And after I finish with him, I'll call our doctor and have him come and look you . . ."

The young man ran down the steps upon which snow was beginning to pile. As he reached the first floor, he struck a match in the dark hallway and groped along another set of steps which, he presumed, led to the basement. At the bottom of these steps, he bumped into another white man.

"Are you the landlord?" the investigator asked.

"Yes," the other white man answered. "What do you want? I'm in a hurry."

"I'm from the ——— Agency," the investigator answered. "Mrs. Blank, on the top floor, is a client of ours. I just called at her apartment and found her ill as a result of the dampness caused by the roof having been burned. I want to know why you haven't put up some sort of covering."

"Is that any of your business?" the landlord asked. "This is my house and I don't see that you've got any right to tell me what to do."

"I think I explained to you why it is my business. It concerns my client and therefore concerns me."

"Listen, I haven't got time to argue with you. I'm in a hurry!"

"And if you'll just tell me whether or not you are going to put some kind of covering over this roof—at once—you can be on your way," the investigator advised.

"And suppose I say I'm not?" the landlord countered.

"Then I'll report you and see that you are arrested before nightfall!"

"See here," said the landlord, "what's the use of making such a fuss? Maybe we can get together. I'm covered by insurance and if I make any repairs before they send their man to okay it, I won't get a cent!"

"But, at least," suggested the investigator, "you can throw a tarpaulin over the place so that the tenants will be protected from the rain and snow."

"The insurance people told me not to touch it, until their man came," the landlord insisted. "And anyway, all of the tenants on that side of the house moved out."

"I realize that, but it rained in here yesterday

and it's snowing now. The dampness will jeopardize the health of all these people."

"So what?" questioned the landlord. "They're only a bunch of niggers!"

"Let me tell you one thing," the investigator declared, "if you don't get a tarpaulin or some sort of covering and put it over this place before I leave here, I'm going to call the police station!"

Up goes a tarpaulin

The indignant young man again struck a match as he climbed the steps leading to the first floor. He then took his position on the stoop and stood there until he was convinced that the landlord had spread a tarpaulin over the roof and the snow no longer piled along the stairs.

New York is the best lighted city in the world. Yet it has been estimated that there are 3,000 miles of dark and gloomy halls, through which millions of New Yorkers are obliged to pass daily. And a goodly portion of those 3,000 miles of dark and gloomy halls are daily casting their shadows over Harlem. There are sections of Harlem where properly lighted hallways are indeed the exception. And all thinking people are aware of the psychological effects of insufficient light and the subsequent effect upon the individual's health.

The newspapers have been telling us about how the London hospital authorities discovered that blackout measures had a distressing effect on patients. But a brilliant artist conceived the happy thought of painting pictures on the black screens that are used to keep light out. Patients were permitted to select their own illustrations and it was found that the conversion of blackout window screens into decorative panels had a cheering influence on doctors and nurses as well as on patients.

And yet there are many who are shocked at the high mortality and immorality ratings given Harlem each year, despite their knowledge of the conditions under which the inhabitants live. Think for a second of the filth that can accumulate in corners of improperly lighted hallways. Then of the disease that can result therefrom. And then think of the crimes that are committed in such places.

Perhaps you can better understand the problems that face Christian parents trying decently to raise children who have to traverse daily these dark hallways if you put yourselves in their places and imagine that it is your children who are walking these dangerous paths.

Overcrowding

In "Harlem Housing," prepared by Franklin O. Nichols in cooperation with the Committee on Inter-racial Problems in Housing and the Citizen's Housing Council of New York, we are told that:

In a study of West Harlem the Mayor's Committee on City Planning points out that this section, less than one-sixteenth of Manhattan's area, contains more than one-tenth of the total population. A single block north of 142nd Street between Seventh and Lenox Avenues has a population of 3,871 persons and is said to be the most crowded dwelling section in the world. . . .

As a result of the economic conditions of West Harlem and the high densities as related to inadequacy of dwelling units, a serious contribution is made to the high disease rates of this area. Tuberculosis is taking a high toll of Negro life in West Harlem. The death rate from this disease is approximately twice as high as that for Manhattan as a whole. The new case rate, although no doubt influenced by vigorous programs of education, still give serious concern to those interested in this problem.

It is obvious that overcrowding is a serious problem in Harlem's congestion. But why is Harlem so crowded? Surely these people do not desire to live so? Indeed not! But the Negro, unlike others, is not allowed to live where he chooses, even in the rare cases where his income is such that he can afford to pay rents that should entitle him to the most comfortable living conditions. While we realize that there are other groups who face slightly similar situations, the Negro has such definite racial markings that instead of being asked out of more desirable neighborhoods, he is not even allowed to move in in the first place.

The duty of opposition

In discussing the plight of Harlem with regard to housing with Aubrey Mallach of the Housing Committee of Community Service Society, I asked Mr. Mallach if, in his researches, he had arrived at any conclusions as to the solving of the problem.

"The fact that Negroes are forced to live in restricted areas is partly responsible," replied Mr. Mallach. "Their families increase rapidly and this creates a reduction in supply and increase in demand. Every landlord charges as much as he can get; because of the demand in Harlem, they get more.

"In real estate prices are not based on cost of production, as real estate prices are controlled almost wholly by the market. And as long as there exists the attitude that the Negroes *have to live in Harlem*, the landlord will continue to charge exorbitant rents. And not only will he continue to charge these terrible rents, but he will continue to neglect houses that are tenanted by Negroes.

"It is the duty of conscious Negro groups to expose these conditions. And since the Negro population expands faster than the area, the solution is to break down area restrictions."

But first we must convince our white brethren that we are their black brothers in Christ. We must beg them to help us to improve our living conditions so that we may better see the Light of His face in this world, and dwell with Him forever in the next.

After Federal Theatre: What?

Straws in the wind indicate a popular theatre of the future.

By Emmet Lavery

WHEN the Federal Theatre was in process of liquidation by Congress a year ago last June, Lionel Barrymore remarked in a radio address from Hollywood that no one can ever take away from the American people for very long anything they really want. Mr. Barrymore, it now becomes more apparent daily, knew whereof he spoke. The people still want theatre and an amazing number of them do not particularly want films. According to a recent Gallup poll, about thirty-two million Americans who can afford to attend motion pictures appear at their neighborhood theatres on an average of only once a month. The alarming thing, according to Hollywood correspondents, is that these people have nothing against films. They just don't find in films anything they need very much. Once a month is enough.

But, you may ask, is the reverse of the proposition true? If they don't want moving pictures, does it follow that they do want theatre? Not necessarily, perhaps, but there has been of late a recurrent frequency to the question: after Federal Theatre, what? And there are other straws in the wind, for those who can find straw in their favorite newspaper.

By this we are not to infer that there is a growing demand for the revival of Federal Theatre as such. The Federal Theatre, as we knew it from October, 1935, to June, 1939, is dead and gone forever. But not even an Act of Congress can kill an idea. And the idea behind Federal Theatre was the idea that art is as much the concern of government as agriculture, that the best art is art which can be enjoyed by all the people, that a truly national art for the United States meant something which was within the geographic as well as the financial range of the average citizen.

Necessity the mother

Our first introduction to this conception of art came about as a result of the necessity of employing out-of-work playwrights and actors in their own professions. Our next approach to this theory of theatre may come about as the result of another emergency: the emergency presented by the crumbling of an old world culture and the consequent shifting of the best of that culture to the

new world. It may well be that the second emergency, in the final analysis, will not provide the final and the permanent base for a national theatre any more than the first emergency did. But unquestionably the current emergency, like the emergency which preceded it, will lay certain foundations for the eventual national theatre in America. The *Comédie Française* in an American pattern is bound to come, and perhaps it will be all the stronger for emerging through a definite process of trial and experimentation. It will not develop overnight in some great marble monument, but it will grow by degrees in the hearts of Americans everywhere. It will come about finally as a result of a new national consciousness—a national consciousness of theatre.

To test the accuracy of this simple prophecy, it is only necessary to weigh two potent and cogent factors: (1) the tremendous and continuing demand for good theatre, stimulated by Federal Theatre over a period of four years in 22 states; (2) the unsettled conditions at home and abroad which make imperative the development of the healthy creative forces of the modern theatre on a national scale, not as an agency for conventional patriotic propaganda, but as a means of maintaining personal and national morale through a medium which is by its very essence personal and uplifting.

The first point can be studied in some detail in late November in a history of Federal Theatre by Hallie Flanagan, which will be published by Duell, Sloan & Pearce under the title "Arena." The second point can be examined about the same time in equal detail in a book from Longmans, called "Theatre for Tomorrow," which it was my good fortune to edit. The one book considers the unequivocal facts of Federal Theatre and the implications which can reasonably be drawn from those facts. The other book, in three new plays by various authors on Damien, Savonarola and Campion, and an outline of ten centuries of the Catholic tradition in drama, offers a new and a broader base for modern social drama. Such books point to one certain fact: interest in modern drama in America is expanding rather than diminishing. What then may we expect on the theatre's horizon in the next few years?

It is quite true, of course, that the next theatre,

national in scope and regional in emphasis, is not bound to follow the techniques of Federal Theatre any more than it is obliged to accept the philosophy of the spiritual tradition in the theatre. It can ignore both or either. But the techniques and the philosophy are concrete realities in American life today. And while we may have come of age slowly in the arts, we Americans have one great gift. We know how to use what we have. We have no forgotten pyramids in our civilization. It is reasonable then to assume that our next approach to a national theatre will inevitably include something of the techniques and the philosophy we are now considering. It follows implicitly like the pattern of a musical or a geometric progression. The country needs theatre and the theatre needs philosophy. The only answer to irresponsibility—personal, national or international—is responsibility. Ergo, the greatest measure of responsibility is found in a theatre which gives some correlation between the natural and the supernatural, some consideration to the questions: who am I, where did I come from, where am I going?

Signposts

Signposts along the road to the national theatre of tomorrow, visible now for several months in our leading journals and newspapers, include:

(1) A more dynamic policy in the Library of Congress, which is seeking to reanimate American thinking by visualizing certain aspects of our American heritage in living research through certain preliminary experiments in radio broadcasting which may revolutionize the usual "cold storage" conception of library operations.

(2) A new alignment of the professional and non-professional stage, first introduced by Charles Coburn at the Mohawk Drama Festival at Union College, later developed by the University of North Carolina with Paul Green's "The Lost Colony"; to be extended in 1941 by Mr. Coburn with the University of California at Los Angeles—the latter experiment being a forerunner perhaps of a new type of "state" theatre in which state universities would use professional acting companies as the laboratory sections of their drama departments.

(3) The increasing use of guest stars from the professional stage by college groups in new plays—among them some excellent Catholic groups—which are effecting an important decentralization of the theatre.

(4) The preliminary survey made by the National Theatre Conference at Western Reserve University, Cleveland, to determine the quantity and quality of theatre activity which may be necessary in the military training camps, once the conscription program is under way.

(5) The increasing number of fine foreign language drama groups now domiciled in this country, including many alumni from the *Josefstadt* and *Burgtheater* in Vienna, the *Magyar Színház* in Budapest, the *Vieux Colombier* and *Comédie Française* from Paris and many others.

Obviously we are, at the immediate moment in America, in a period of intermission between what we had yesterday by way of nation-wide activity in the drama and what we may have tomorrow,

or the day after. There is room for private as well as government enterprise in the days that lie ahead. It is quite probable that any program of drama to be undertaken in the camps by the government may stick fairly close to entertainment and avoid the experimental type of theatre. It is quite likely that all too many colleges will turn a deaf ear to the challenge of new plays and be a little slow to make a place for the distinguished foreign stars now in our midst. But out of our great common necessities in the theatre—the necessity of carrying the theatre to people who want it and the necessity of imbuing that theatre with an antidote for the despair of materialism—will come in the end something rare and fine. It may be a series of state university theatres, patterned after Charles Coburn's experiment in California and Paul Green's experience at the University of North Carolina. It may be a compact national organization, with four or five regional branches, supplementing but not competing with private enterprise, operating with the best professional talent available. But whatever it is, it will preserve the idea of theatre in its true American character: as a necessity for all the people and not as a luxury for the few.

Where in America today can the theatre-goer at a modest price find modern and classical repertory, foreign language drama and a truly experimental theatre? We had these things when we had Federal Theatre. We can and shall have them again.

One of the great ironies about the withdrawal of the government from theatre production is that now as never before the American people need something that they can not get from films. They need the personal creative human touch of an imaginative theatre, where the audience as well as the player actually does something to enrich the moment in which he lives.

Our films, newspapers, radios do much to enlarge our vision these days and to make us conscious of the roots of our American heritage. But the best film, newspaper or radio audience is by the very nature of the medium concerned a passive audience. You can watch a film and dream with your eyes wide open. You can listen to a radio and do something else at the same time. In the theatre you give your heart the way the Psalmist gave his when he lifted it up in song. Theatre at its best is conscious creation in the image of the Creator.

Which is why the theatre is the great magic. It is why we shall have it again some day. It is part of our very selves and will not be denied. Only the next time, let's remember that every horse is not Trojan. We have a right to be on our guard against subversive activities, but we have obligations too in a democracy: obligations not to destroy our neighbor's good name with careless

talk. The theatre in America today is not communist and never has been, yet in recent months it has become as popular to lambaste Actors Equity as it once was to smear Federal Theatre. In years to come, it is my conviction, the full story of Federal Theatre will be of as much interest to students of jurisprudence as to students of theatre. For this is an *affaire Dreyfuss* in an American background. But that is another story and a little beside the immediate point.

The point is that an American theatre began but did not end with Federal Theatre. And pending the second and possibly third phases of the movement for a national theatre, it behooves our colleges to carry on where Federal Theatre left off—to carry on, not as separatists in the theatre, but as a force which integrates the professional and the non-professional stage in the steady development of new plays, new techniques and new audiences.

We can rebuild America in our theatres. We can only escape from it in our films. The theatre, and the theatre alone, relates us to the time in which we in America still live.

Communications

WASHINGTON NEWS

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: My attention has just been called to a letter appearing on page 387 of your issue of August 30, 1940, signed by "Washington Observer." The letter contains a series of libelous and utterly false and fantastic statements concerning certain officials of the National Labor Relations Board, myself included.

A few illustrations will serve to show the irresponsibility of the writer of that letter. He states, for example, that Mr. Lee Pressman is my brother-in-law, whereas Mr. Pressman is in no way related to me either by blood or by marriage. He states that I am engaged in a conspiracy with Representative Howard Smith and Mr. Edmund M. Toland, chairman and counsel, respectively, of the House Committee investigating the National Labor Relations Board, whereas it is too well known by everyone familiar with the Smith Committee investigation that Representative Smith, Mr. Toland and myself are anything but co-conspirators. He charges me with being a "fellow traveler" and "the CP's strategist in the Board." I do not know what he means to accomplish by these unsupported charges. If he means to insinuate that I have conducted myself in public office other than with honor and devotion, he has been contradicted on the record of the Smith Committee by such men as J. Warren Madden, Edwin S. Smith, Donald Wakefield Smith, John M. Carmody, Lloyd K. Garrison, Francis Biddle and Harry A. Millis, all of whom have known me long and intimately; while, on the other hand, there is not a suggestion of evidence in the extensive record made by the Smith Committee which could conceivably warrant such designa-

tions. He accuses me of conspiracy against Mr. David J. Saposs, whereas I have repeatedly expressed myself as regarding the attacks on Mr. Saposs as being cowardly, unfair, and stemming from improper motives. There is no need to dignify further the imaginative assertions of "Washington Observer" by reply.

It is important today, in the interest of the national unity which "Washington Observer" himself stresses, that public servants not be subjected to such serious attack under the cloak of anonymity. "Washington Observer" himself is disruptive of national unity in seeking to undermine public confidence in government officials, while at the same time shielding himself, that those he accuses may not confront him.

I feel certain that, having considered all the facts, THE COMMONWEAL will, in all fairness to the individuals attacked in the letter and to its readers, make public the name of its anonymous correspondent. I feel also that in all fairness THE COMMONWEAL should print my letter with prominence equal to that of "Washington Observer's."

Finally, I hope that if "Washington Observer" is not one of your official correspondents, that you will want to disavow any implications that you endorse the statements made in his letter.

NATHAN WITT.

TO the Editors: The letter of Nathan Witt, secretary of the National Labor Relations Board, in reply to charges that he is a fellow-traveler, the CP's strategist in the Board and guilty of Machiavellian "innocence" and poisonous indifference to the attacks on David J. Saposs, research chief of the Board, cannot cover up the basic facts:

Fellow-traveler: Witt was a member of the American League for Peace and Democracy, which was revealed to be a CP transmission-belt by Earl Browder and the Dies Committee. He was also one of the initiators of the National Lawyers' Guild, and both he and Thomas I. Emerson, associate general counsel of the Board, have remained members of this communist innocents' group despite the resignations of Berle, Jackson and others who left it when it was revealed to be CP-dominated. (Dies Committee Hearings, Vol. 10, p. 6413.) Moreover, he is a member of the national committee of the International Juridical Association, an offshoot of the CP's International Labor Defense, whose secretary, Carol Weiss King, was attorney for Harry Bridges and Earl Browder. Furthermore, Witt has attended the functions and encouraged the activities of CP front organizations.

Communist Strategist: In interviewing applicants for positions with the Board, Witt has been reported as asking them questions as to their social philosophy, imposing "his own peculiar criteria, sympathy for the Communist Party line, as a job prerequisite." (Herbert Harris, "Labor's Civil War," p. 167.) He has also permitted and encouraged the circulation of petitions of CP front organizations forwarding CP policies and raising funds in the Board. He has been considered to favor the CIO bargaining unit before the Board and has harrassed those

like Elinore Herrick, who have incurred the ill-will of the communist wing of the CIO because they refused to be budged from their impartial attitude as between the AFL and the CIO. Only recently, Witt and Board member Edwin Smith were instrumental in placing Aaron Warner, another CP fellow-traveler, as Special Examiner of the new administrative division of the Board, over the opposition of Dr. Leiserson. Warner was an active officer of the CP-sponsored Interprofessional Association in the District of Columbia.

Mr. Witt states that I charged him with being engaged in a conspiracy with Representative Smith and Toland in attacks on Mr. Saposs, when a calm reading of my letter will disclose that it charged the CP with joining hands under the table with Toland. Apparently Mr. Witt identifies himself with the Communist Party.

Saposs Affair: Witt claims that he "repeatedly" expressed himself against the unfair attacks on Mr. Saposs. I challenge him to give the time and place. As one of those who arranged the presentation of the Board's case before the Smith Committee and the House sub-committee on appropriations, Witt had ample opportunity to "express" his attitude. However, although all the other key people of the Board were allowed to appear before these committees, Mr. Saposs was not given the opportunity to explain the work of his division and present his own defense. The only time that he appeared before either committee was when he was called by the committee—and not to present his own case, but rather for hostile questioning.

Witt's Testimonials: Mr. Witt claims that men like Professor Millis, Francis Biddle and Lloyd K. Garrison testified to the quality of his work for the Board. But a glance at page 416 of Volume 2 of the Smith Committee Hearings (as published by the Bureau of National Affairs), which he claims as authority, disclose that these men were speaking of Witt's work with the *old* National Labor Relations Board, where Witt was in an obscure position, and not in the *present* Board.

Mr. Witt attacks my anonymity as unfair, but your readers will understand its necessity in view of the long arm of the CP, which has taken retribution on other people who have opposed their destructive operations.

WASHINGTON OBSERVER.

TO the Editors: There has been called to my attention a letter contained in your August 30 edition which is signed anonymously by a "Washington Observer," relating to certain alleged attacks upon Mr. Saposs of the National Labor Relations Board in which my name is mentioned.

I have read this letter very carefully and it is a most malicious libel upon me.

This letter asserts that I am a brother-in-law of Nathan Witt, Secretary of the National Labor Relations Board. This assertion, while not important, is, however, revealing of the deliberate maliciousness of the author of the letter and of his inability to be accurate. I am not in any way, either through blood or marriage, related to Mr. Nathan Witt.

The letter further states that representatives of the CIO who contacted members of Congress for the purpose of defeating amendments to the National Labor Relations Act were advised by me not to defend Saposs or the pending cut in appropriations for the National Labor Relations Board which was directed against Mr. Saposs' division. In this connection I merely wish to call to your attention a speech which I personally made before the convention of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee, held in the city of Chicago on May 14. I enclose a copy of this speech. You will note that it was I who introduced to the convention, and secured the adoption of, a telegram to be sent to the President of the United States protesting the specific cut in the appropriations for the Economics Division of the National Labor Relations Board of which Mr. Saposs is the head.

At no time were any of the representatives of the CIO either by me or anyone else advised in any way not to defend and protect the full appropriation for the Economics Division of the Board. Furthermore, I am sure that if anyone had merely taken the trouble to contact Mr. Murdock and Mr. Healey, the two minority members of the Smith Committee, to ascertain whether they had received in any way intimation from the CIO or its representatives regarding Mr. Saposs or his Division, they would have been advised that no such representations had been made at all. On the contrary, all members of Congress were repeatedly advised that the CIO was adamant in its demand that full appropriations be made to the Labor Board, particularly for the Economics Division which, in our opinion, was so important to the administration of the Act.

The letter specifically refers to me as a communist. This is a deliberate and malicious lie. It is also most cowardly for a person to make so serious a charge and yet dare not sign his name to the letter but attempt to hide his identity through the guise of a "Washington Observer."

I have had considerable admiration for the fairness of your magazine in its reporting of labor events. On the basis of my statements and the material which I have presented, it would appear to me that it would only be fair that my letter be printed by you with prominence equal to that given to the anonymous letter of the "Washington Observer." Furthermore, I feel that I may properly call upon your magazine to indicate whether the statements and comments contained in the anonymous letter of the "Washington Observer" represent the attitude of your magazine or merely the opinion of this anonymous writer. I believe that your readers, as well as I, are entitled to an expression on this point, because the statements relating to myself and the CIO, as I have indicated, are deliberately malicious and outright falsehoods.

LEE PRESSMAN.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The letter, "Washington News," sent us by a *Commonweal* reader and published in the *Communication Column* on August 30, was not considered by the Editors an attack on the labor laws of recent years, nor on the National Labor Relations Board. It was written, indeed, as "congratulations on your editorial,

'The NLRB Is Right' (August 16). Concerning the forces and pressures under which the Board functions (clearly important, in themselves and as a sign) this magazine looks for information as to facts, desires to injure no person, hopes to benefit the trade union movement and the relations of union labor, industry and government. The Communications Columns are a forum for Commonwealth readers, and the views and opinions there expressed are those of the writers of the letters.

New Haven, Conn.

TO the Editors: I wish to congratulate you on having had the privilege of publishing Bishop Luce's superb article, "The Papal Peace Program." It is indeed refreshing to read his clear and vigorous demonstration that isolationism is un-Catholic, that peace is not merely the absence of armed conflict, and that we have no right to abdicate our duty of calling criminal aggression by its proper name. The fact that the Popes have taught the need of an international organization, with power to enforce its decisions, is also one that we greatly need to be reminded of. I sincerely hope that you will make this article accessible in pamphlet form.

T. LAWRASON RIGGS.

The Stage & Screen

Jupiter Laughs

DR A. J. CRONIN is one of the most interesting and sincere of modern English novelists, and therefore his turning to the drama might well be an event of importance. His novels show that, while scarcely what would be called an optimist by the average man in the street, he possesses a strong spiritual sense and deep religious feeling. We would expect to find his play informed with these qualities, and we are not disappointed. Whatever weaknesses "Jupiter Laughs" may have as acting drama, there is in its essence a nobility and even a spirituality rare in the modern theatre. The story concerns an agnostic physician who is on the brink of discovering a drug which will revolutionize the treatment of mental diseases. In the sanitarium to which he is attached he meets a young woman doctor with whom he falls in love. This arouses the enmity of the wife of the chief of the sanitarium, with whom he has been having an affair and who in revenge attempts to burn the notes of her former lover's discovery. The notes are rescued from the flames by the young woman doctor, who is, however, killed by an explosion when she upsets a can of ether. The heartbroken doctor thereupon decides to go as a missionary physician to China, a post which the dead woman was to have taken.

The real meaning of the play is evidently the triumph of the spiritual over the mundane. The young woman doctor is a believing Christian, and at the end it is her spirit which lifts the veil from the eyes of the agnostic Dr. Venner, who abandons the worldly position his dis-

covery has won for him to work for the underprivileged of the earth. If not precisely yet a believing Christian, he leaves for China at least convinced that the ideal of the girl he had loved is the ideal which must be his. Dr. Cronin's intention then is of the noblest, and as such is to be commended. The trouble is that he is not yet the master of dramatic technique, with the result that he contrives his story, when it should rather flow naturally from the characters. These characters are at times living men and women, and then again they become stock figures of the author's contriving. When Dr. Cronin has attained a greater mastery of his tools he ought to prove a welcome addition to those who are writing for the English stage, but at present he is still laboring under the handicap of the novelist. In the novel description and atmosphere often hide artificiality of plot, but in the drama the light of truth is not filtered through any such kindly mediums. It strikes strong and clear and shows up makeshift joinings and contrivings.

"Jupiter Laughs" is admirably acted. In Alexander Knox, who plays the young physician, New York makes the acquaintance of an actor who should go far, while Jessica Tandy is equally admirable as the girl he loves. Other excellent impersonations are given by Edith Meiser, Nancy Sheridan, and Charles Jordan, while Esther Mitchell gives a splendidly etched and poignant portrait of a young Cockney woman. "Jupiter Laughs" is fine in intent, has many interesting scenes, but as a whole somehow doesn't quite come off. (*At the Biltmore Theatre.*)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Sublime to Ridiculous

"PASTOR HALL," made in England, released here by James Roosevelt, is the most anti-nazi of all the anti-nazi films. Seething with hatred, this grim picture reveals what happens when Storm Troopers force a little German village to follow the dictated régime of the Führer and are resisted by a much-loved pastor who bravely refuses to rewrite the Scriptures according to the New Spirit's party lines. Good, kindly, God-fearing Pastor Hall, whose fictional story by Ernst Toller somewhat resembles Pastor Niemöller's, is forced by his conscience to denounce the nazis. In a concentration camp he sees and is subjected to the most sadistically cruel barbarities that have been shown in films. That this kind of melodramatic cinema is at all plausible is due to the excellent performance of Wilfrid Lawson whose terrific sincerity, surmounting the too-English and almost comic accents of the other players, rises to magnificence when he consoles the young girl who was a victim of immorality in a labor camp and when, inspired by truth and duty, he preaches his final sermon before going to death. "Because men are not mute animals, the Voice will be heard." Those who see this film must remember that it was made by the foe of Germans and that "Grapes of Wrath," "Fury" and "Brigham Young," which show Americans' cruelty to Americans were made by Americans. The prologue, written by Robert Sherwood and recited by Mrs. Roosevelt, reminds any who miss the point that the Pastor Halls will survive all dictators.

Other new films seem rather pale beside "Pastor Hall." Phrenetic, flimsy, funny "*Hired Wife*" lets big cement-man Brian Aherne, when it suddenly becomes necessary to put everything in his wife's name, marry his secretary (Rosalind Russell) because his latest flame, a calculating blonde model (Virginia Bruce), says no. William Seiter has directed this nonsense with fast timing so you won't have a chance to consider its emptiness. Some clever gags are put over well by the girls, and Robert Benchley manages to make every scene he's in seem very funny indeed. Although "*Hired Wife*" is as entertaining as the other bedroom and triangle farces we've been getting an overdose of lately, it left me rather cold. Perhaps I'm getting fed up with these snappy triangle comedies that follow the same pattern. I'm also bored with those much overworked double takes, or delayed responses, that every comedy uses. You know: Rosalind says, "The cement you love to touch"; and Brian says, "The cement you —" and then suddenly he catches on, and his ham smile changes to ham disgust. Let's have some actors who at least seem smarter than their audiences.

A little picture that starts with a gleam of intelligence that gets lost in the filming is "*Dance, Girl, Dance*." It centers about a couple of dancers: Lucille Ball, in a lively performance as the chorine who is discovered and graduates—into burlesque; and Maureen O'Hara, whose aspirations for ballet leave her jobless until she does a toney number as a stooge for Lucille's hot stuff. If Producer Erich Pommer and Director Dorothy Arzner had dropped the cheap nonsense from Vicki Baum's story, this might have been another "Stage Door" about ballet instead of theatre. It even has Maria Ouspenskaya, who has become Hollywood's perpetual madame for struggling artistes. But the plot, which drags in Louis Hayward's divorcing Virginia Field, falling for Maureen, marrying Lucille, further complicates this shop girl's dream by having Ralph Bellamy, the director of the American Ballet, make goo-goo eyes at Maureen. Contrasting scenes between Lucille's typical burlesque numbers and Maureen's striving for beauty make first rate cinema that is wasted in this instance.

In spite of its slow direction and talky script, "*Dr. Kildare Goes Home*" is so full of the milk of human kindness and worthy ideas on socialized medicine that it deserves your attention. Furthermore we see so little of Lionel Barrymore these days that his return to the screen, with the capable assistance of Lew Ayres, Laraine Day, Samuel S. Hinds, Gene Lockhart, Alma Kruger, is most welcome. Stressing again that the doctor's business is alleviation of pain and postponement of death, this continuation of the Kildare series takes Dr. Ayres to his home town where he starts a clinic with three unemployed young doctors and makes some intelligent statements on preventative medicine. Dr. Barrymore also growls a few sane remarks on marriage and its purpose that come as a surprise considering the flashy kind of escapist entertainment that Hollywood is dishing out in these hectic post-war, pre-war, war days.

If "*Men Against the Sky*" is a sample of the new cycle of airplane pictures that Hollywood is flying into, I'll

stick to the safe truck cycle that was started with "They Drive by Night." The inept script, pitiful humor, careless editing, and the hopeless efforts of Richard Dix, Edmund Lowe, Wendie Barrie and Kent Taylor to act out a stupid story do more than counterbalance the good shots of the manufacture of planes and of test pilots in action.

As "*Rangers of Fortune*," Fred MacMurray (very American and a "tricky, shiftless but clever rat"), Gilbert Roland (very Spanish, romantic, handsome), and Albert Dekker (a prize fighter acting like Jimmie Durante doing a take-off of a Steinbeck half wit) run like mad into the face of danger. They are hard with men, tender with women, and are especially tender to little Betty Brewer, Paramount's newest "find," a thirteen-year-old girl who exhibits great possibilities. None of these people have much in the way of story in Frank Butler's screenplay, but Director Sam Wood gets as much out of them and the funny lines as he can. The result is pleasant entertainment that verges on satire and has a lot of fun laughing at itself and at movies in general. Don't pay any attention to the plot in which Joseph Schildkraut is a grandee defending his property against riff-raff by killing off the village's citizens. The three tough hombres and tomboyish Betty will keep you amused.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Reflections on the Good Pagan

By FLORENCE D. COHALAN

IN A RECENT interview in Berlin Dr. Rosenberg declared that one consequence of the German victory he so confidently expects will be the disappearance of the English gentleman and his replacement by the nazi worker as the dominant and characteristic type of the New Order. Thus the triumph of the proletariat will be achieved by Berlin instead of Moscow.

The era that this war is ending was one of the greatest periods in history, and the era that will follow will confront the Church with a crisis equalled in gravity only two or three times since its foundation. The choicest and most characteristic product of the dying age was that combination of grace, dignity, considerateness and charm, the gentleman, who set no higher standard of excellence than his own sense of propriety, and who never deferred to conscience as the revelation of a God to Whom he owed absolute obedience. Newman has described him in one of his most famous passages. The gentleman was moulded successively by the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, and he is seen in contrast with the barbarian, whom he despised for his crudity, and with the Christian, whose acceptance of supernatural sanctions he regarded as abject.

It is difficult for the Christian to understand the gentleman because of the long struggle between them for supremacy in Europe, and because converts to Christianity

have dealt more on the weakness of the position they abandoned than on its strength. Hence it is rare to find anyone who knows both sides well enough to interpret each to the other. Her background, temperament, character and attainments have admirably equipped Miss Rosalind Murray for such a task. Her book "The Good Pagan's Failure"* is one of the most important Catholic books in recent years. Miss Murray, the daughter of Gilbert Murray, the great classical scholar, is the wife of Arnold Toynbee, the historian, and is a convert of some years' standing. Her familiarity since childhood with the sceptical, polished and learned world which paid homage to the good pagan enables her to see at close range the disappointment caused by his failure and the bewilderment and mortification felt as it becomes increasingly evident that his collapse is no mere accident but the result of his principles. Her book describes with pathetic irony how the good pagan's temporary triumph over the Christian produced the new barbarian who now rises with parricidal fury to destroy him.

Modern liberalism marks the latest development of the good pagan's abandonment of Christian principles. The fundamental error of the liberals was their rejection of God and the supernatural. This reduced Christianity to mere humanitarianism, which has proved an inadequate foundation for the brotherhood of man that they wished to maintain and promote. This impoverishment of Christianity led to the narrowing of the meaning of neighbor, which no longer included all mankind but only those with whose political, religious, social and economic interests they were concerned. The Christian interpretation of neighbor was no longer possible or intelligible, and thus the way was opened for the racial and class struggles which are playing havoc with the world today.

It must be conceded that his rejection of God and the supernatural allowed the good pagan to concentrate his energies on remedying the disorders in this world. Though he did not realize it, a sense of pity which was a Christian inheritance was part of his impulse. His achievements in this sphere are impressive and unique and are often cited to the disadvantage of the less energetic Christian. The Christian's sense of security tends to make him leisurely and he is inclined to postpone reforms indefinitely. He often thinks he is patient when he is merely indolent. He excuses his inactivity by reflecting that heretics are always in a hurry, and too often applies the parable of the cockle and the wheat to conditions which require immediate attention. Moreover, the Christian knows that though temporal affairs have prospered under pagan care, the crisis that confronts us is really spiritual. The masses may have many material benefits which they did not possess when Christianity was dominant, but they are not more contented, as the revolutionary ferment in every country today shows. Besides the material benefits of the pagan régime are fleeting, as the disasters that have overtaken Europe prove.

While pagan resentment at the Christian attitude springs from conflicting ideals the Christian sometimes

aggravates it by failing to avoid certain dangers to which his principles expose him. He is tempted to despair of the world, and in his desire to avoid its contamination he risks abandonment of his mission to leaven it. When his enemies quarrel he is apt to rejoice as a spectator and to take satisfaction in a retribution which may jeopardize his own interests. The Church herself is never interested in reprisals and views these retributions simply as warnings, not as occasions of glee. The Christian has no right to be surprised or depressed by human weakness in its endless forms. He should realize that it is inevitable and can be turned to good if he will only be true to his vocation. To surrender to the world or to compromise on essential points is baseness that stands in woeful contrast to the heroism to which he is called.

A necessary consequence of the good pagan's denial of God is his misunderstanding of man, to whom he attributed endless perfectibility. He did not see that the Christian morality which he admired depended on the Christian dogma which he rejected. The changes in conventional morality that this century has witnessed, especially since the World War, simply indicate that moral standards are finally being brought into conformity with intellectual belief. The good pagan's principles have come to their logical conclusions, and man has steadily dwindled in importance until he who would usurp the dignity of God has sunk to the incredibly low state he occupies in the new revolutionary societies.

A further consequence of the good pagan's fundamental error has been his failure to meet the problems of sin and suffering. This is what has produced the new barbarian. While the masses were not infected by the infidelity of their masters and still adhered to Christian morality, the problem of governing them was relatively simple. But when they were educated out of their old beliefs and ceased striving to live up to what they had come to regard as an impossible code, the problem changed radically. If sin is an illusion, and suffering the only evil why should they be deprived of the good things their masters enjoy? On what principles are they to be denied? It is useless to appeal to certain aspects of Christianity to restrain them. Christianity must be accepted or rejected as a whole, and failure to realize this leads only to compromises that cannot last. The good pagan's world has produced the hopeless and bitterly discontented masses who find no solution for their problems in the existing order. They are conscious of sin and suffering and are not content to be told these things do not exist or cannot be remedied. Nor can the good pagan offer any adequate motive for enduring them. They have been deprived of belief in the true God and have turned to idols. In any event they could not be content with no belief at all. They will try to rebuild society in the light of their new beliefs.

The dilemma of the good pagan is a tragic and painful one. His world is now seen to have been essentially transitory. He finds that he can no longer stand alone and that his old beliefs are not helpful. Science and progress and evolution and democracy have failed him. Even "liberty, equality, fraternity" is gone. His return to Christianity would involve a confession of failure and a

* Longmans. \$3.00.

repudiation of the false liberty of which he was so proud. This would require humility, the Christian virtue he finds most distasteful. During the era of his greatness he was living on Christian capital and now nearly all of it is gone. If he does not return to Christianity he will be destroyed, and if he does he will be transformed. It is only in Christianity that what is good and true in his ideals can be salvaged. For Christianity alone possesses the vitality that would enable a dying world to revive. This vitality can only be infused into a society that accepts Christian principles.

The Christian must hope and work for the good pagan's return. He has much indeed to recommend him and could be very useful in fighting the destructive forces he has unleashed. The present war marks the end of his world but not the end of ours. As the Christian forces prepare to meet the new barbarian, they will require all the help this many-talented prodigal can give.

More Books of the Week

BIOGRAPHY

Pilgrim's Way. John Buchan (Lord Tweedsmuir). Houghton. \$3.00.

"**PILGRIM'S WAY**" was written by John Buchan who as Lord Tweedsmuir became Governor of Canada in 1935. Only a week before his death, the author put the finishing touches to what he himself regarded not as an autobiography but as "a record of the impressions made upon me by the outer world." With "Pilgrim's Way," John Buchan had written some forty volumes, several of them, like "Greenmantle" and "The Thirty-Nine Steps," highly popular adventure stories. Yet his literary activity by no means consumed all his time, for he was active in various enterprises, not to mention affairs of Empire with which his life was to a large degree interwoven.

Written with great charm and imagination, "Pilgrim's Way" covers a fairly long span of years and contains besides an account of his life, a fine gallery of portraits of those with whom he was intimately or well acquainted, such men as the scholar-statesman Milner, Ramsay MacDonald and T. E. Lawrence. But what is most illuminating in this volume is the view it offers of the long process by which a raw and spirited youth from the Scottish Lowlands is tamed and converted into a symbol of Empire. The boy who was fired by what he calls a gypsy impulse and who had spent so much of his time reliving Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" is gradually molded into a devotee of Empire, but of Empire highly idealized and bearing none too close a resemblance to the reality. The pilgrim is finally turned into an imperial official, and what might have been a magnificent autobiography is no more than the life of a discreet and cautious diplomat. Yet it must be said that there are high moments when John Buchan gets the better of Lord Tweedsmuir. But not for long. Even when he is deeply moved by the vision of Lincoln or Whitman, one has the feeling that the great world of common life is no more real to him than a painted backdrop. And this statement would have horrified John Buchan. But because the author was fundamentally a man of acute perception and deep feeling, the book is well worth reading.

ROBERT C. POLLOCK.

Rudyard Kipling. Edward Shanks. Doubleday. \$2.50.

ONE OF the most telling sentences in this stimulating volume of criticism is the following: "The younger critics, instead of defining his [Kipling's] faults, began to deny that he had any merits." Mr. Shanks attempts to restore the balance by pointing out just how great was Kipling's mastery of the English language, both as poet and prose writer. With this expository matter, no one can quarrel.

However, when Mr. Shanks attempts to prove that Kipling was great as a political thinker, and that there can be drawn from his writings a pattern for English political and social action, the reader must feel that the events of the past few years have dictated this view, rather than that it was ever in Kipling's mind, either explicitly or implicitly. One thing, Mr. Shanks has done; he has charted the course of Kipling's changing opinions on political subjects with ably-documented clearness and killed forever the myth that Kipling was a sort of articulate Colonel Blimp. Kipling's so-called "Imperialism" was neither simple nor crass; it had reasons and complication and this book is an admirable attempt to establish the reputation of a great and misunderstood English writer.

J. G. E. HOPKINS.

POETRY

Joyce Kilmer—Poems, Essays, Letters. Doubleday, Doran. \$3.50.

IT IS HARD to realize that a child—it might have been one of his own!—who was eight years old when Joyce Kilmer fell in France in the July of 1918, would today be a man or woman of thirty. This means that a new generation has grown up to whom Joyce may be scarcely any longer either a friend or a legend, but to whom he might easily become both by a tactful reintroduction. And as the best introduction to any author is by way of his writings, this reprint in one handsome volume of the collected edition of his work issued shortly after his death, with its spirited memoir by "Bob" Holliday, seems most opportune. For the story of this humorous and indefatigable young journalist and man of letters, the ardent Catholic convert, the husband and father and soldier all too ready to lay down his life in a war he believed was to end future wars, carries a permanent and particular message to young people once again facing many of his own problems. Armed by his experience they may even face them more wisely and more gallantly.

Many poetic byways and several blind alleys of verse have been followed since Joyce Kilmer's unfinished career was cut short. It is noticeable that many of them are already abandoned; and while neither literature nor life is ever quite the same after a tour of experimentation, it is also interesting to watch many of our best poets returning to the simplicity of expression and democracy of feeling—not a few, like Mr. T. S. Eliot, even to a definitely Christian faith—which belonged to Joyce Kilmer by choice as well as temperament. None of his best work suffers by rereading or comparison, and this volume which illustrates his wide versatility should find a welcome place waiting upon the shelves of public and private libraries all over the country. It is a brave and enduring part of our national heritage. But perhaps one might suggest to the publishers that a place waits also for the smaller volume of "selected" work, a fastidious winnowing which the poet himself did not live to make.

KATHERINE BRÉGY.

New Zealand Poems. Eileen Duggan. Macmillan. \$1.25.

I WAS probably the first person in this country to hear about Eileen Duggan, as I was certainly the first to write an article about her. This was contributed to THE COMMONWEAL nearly fourteen years ago, at which time she sent me a couple of poorly printed little pamphlets of her verse and I tried to induce Macmillan to publish her. It was naturally a personal satisfaction to me when they reversed themselves twelve years later and that they have followed "Poems" rather promptly with a second book, "New Zealand Poems."

How very New Zealand Miss Duggan is is indicated by the three-page glossary she appends of Maori terms. But nobody should be intimidated on that account: their meaning can usually be guessed at. Her spirit is Gaelic and her outlook Catholic, as these four lines will suffice to show:

Oh you the lucky woman, Meri, you the lucky woman!
A mouth at your breast, and a child in your shawl,
A son out of God, and a chief for your people,
Ai-ee! All that, and I none at all.

That she is a genuine poet appears in the fact that rarely is her theme one of explicit piety, and then never conventionally so; but that piety fiercely or tenderly flashes out, not to be restrained, as a thrilling instant, if only by way of implication—heaven heard in her native *tuis* or glimpsed flaring in the *rata*. Above all she is moved by the winds from the sea and the great glittering waves of her islands. If one line, more than another, might be taken as summing up what is most characteristic in her, it is "This is quick salt—this, alert water." She is a poet of expectant moments, so that again I may quote her, as the best way of reviewing her work, to say that it is

Like that strange stir before the skylarks sing,
Like that strange wave which throats the turning tide,
Like that strange shine before a star comes new.

There is not a poem in this little book that fails to reveal a fresh perception or an entirely individual utterance. Eileen Duggan's is one of the very few authentic lyric voices of our time.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

RELIGION

Toward Loving the Psalms. C. C. Martindale, S.J. Sheed & Ward. \$2.75.

CERTAINLY those whose lives are committed, by ordination or religious profession, to the realm of the Psalms will find in Father Martindale's book reasons for rejoicing. The scholarly treatises by Boylan and Bird are necessary as introductory studies of the text of the Psalter, but here we have a more appreciative poetic and realistic interpretation, whereby one can actually come to love this gold of Hebrew literature. They are given a shining new meaning by being placed in their liturgical connection and made not only to beautify but to serve the life of the Catholic devotee. The relation which the Psalm may have to contemporary events is not neglected. In fact, one concludes that this poetry, like Shakespeare's, has an ever living bearing on the universal and particular phases of the soul's life.

The first part of the book leads one into the riches of the psalmodic literature, chiefly by discussion of particular verses. Then follow several meditations on the various Psalms used in the liturgy, emphasizing Praise, Faith, Sin, Sacrifice, the Apostolate, and the Life in God. The applications are varied and timely, and hence the medita-

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tions will be a great and valuable quarry to Catholics who say the Divine Office. This book forms a compendium of ascetic and moral theology. RICHARD FLOWER, O.S.B.

The Price of Leadership. John Middleton Murry. Harper. \$2.00.

THE AUTHOR, now a clergyman of the Church of England, has written a trenchant criticism of secularized society, especially in England. Writing before the outbreak of the present war, he declares that "the real conflict that is preparing is the conflict between Christianity and anti-Christian nationalism." He severely criticizes Protestantism for forgetting the necessity of a social relationship with God, proclaims the immediate need for "a supernatural authority," and states, as emphatically as any Catholic could, that "if the authority of God is really to be restored it must be set at the very center of our education."

Yet he considers the Catholic Church powerless to deal with totalitarian nationalism. Following Thomas and Matthew Arnold, both of whom he greatly admires, he believes that the only hope can come, for England at least, in a national church, identical with "the state as an instrument for realizing the Kingdom of God." Mr. Murry even quotes with approval F. D. Maurice's statement concerning the church, "that according to the will of her author and her Lord she is not meant to have an independent existence." Conscious though he should be of the heroic and prayerful spirit which many leaders of the Established Church of England are showing in this hour of national agony, a Catholic must still see in Mr. Murry's Anglican thesis not only inconsistency, but a failure to keep the things of God from all danger of Caesar's control.

T. LAWRASON RIGGS.

BRIEFERS

Father Huntington. Vida Dutton Scudder. Dutton. \$3.50.

MISS SCUDDER tells us that, when this leader of the "Catholic Revival" in the Protestant Episcopal Church made his monastic profession to Bishop Potter in 1884, the rare "Roman" Catholic reactions were "so scornful as to sound cross." The present reviewer feels no such temptations. This carefully prepared and deeply felt biography is always edifying and often inspiring, especially in its description of Father Huntington's death in 1935. He was a devoted servant of Christ and His poor, a wise and holy guide to souls, and his complete sincerity is obvious. We "Romans" (with whom, says Miss Scudder, he had little or no contact) need have no hesitation in recognizing that he was the recipient of many graces; and surely he now knows that there can be no Catholic Church outside that visible and indivisible unity of which the Chair of Peter is the divinely appointed guarantee.

The Fire and the Wood. R. C. Hutchinson. Farrar & Rinehart. \$2.50.

THE SUBTITLE is "A Love Story," and the story is about a cold-blooded young German doctor who happens to be a Jew and also happens to fall in love with a tuberculous serving-girl upon whom he is trying out a new cure, with fine Nazi disdain for the individual. His love humanizes the man (and corrects his sloppy thinking), but by this time Hitler has arrived and is throwing

Jews into concentration camps. What happens thereafter is dramatic and significant, but even more depressing. And in spite of always able, often exciting, and sometimes beautiful writing, Hutchinson doesn't quite overcome the extreme woefulness of his story. His hero is entirely human for only about 20 pages, and his serving-girl with the soul of a poetess just misses coming alive. In general, however, the book is interesting, moving and remarkably Christian. The usual quota of profanity and sexual excitements is conspicuous by its absence, and for these and other reasons "The Fire and the Wood" can be definitely recommended to Catholic readers of fiction.

The Flying Visit. Peter Fleming. Drawings by Low. Scribners. \$1.50.

ENGLISH to the core. This gentle ribbing of Herr Hitler, which supposes him to have fallen in a parachute from an airplane which explodes over the British Isles, is witty and decent and human. But present events also make it to any non-Britisher a trifle macabre. Herr Hitler has quite a time of it in England, and the British Government has quite a time of it getting rid of him, since as soon as he disappears a double takes his place back home and everyone realizes that they can't prove they have the right man. Finally the RAF solves the problem by dumping him back onto Germany.

Foundation Stone. Lella Warren. Knopf. \$3.00.

LONG, painstaking, adult narrative of pioneering which bears a striking resemblance to "Gone With the Wind." Beginning in South Carolina in 1823, the story ends in Alabama at the close of the Civil War. Plantation life is depicted frankly, on its sunny and sordid sides. Dealing as it does with several generations and with no particular hero or heroine, "Foundation Stone" is less focused than GWTW, although Lucinda, one of the second generation, often recalls the famous Scarlett. It is not so rousing a tale. What theme there is winds around the vitality and courage of three generations of women.

How to Keep Mentally Fit. Lowell Thomas. Howell, Soskin. \$2.00.

A FEW helpful hints and dozens of amusing brain exercisers comprise this little book based on a rather mechanistic conception of the human mind. It touches at a number of widely scattered points, among them public speaking, and Mr. Thomas virtually ascribes his success in life to the way he put across Wendell Phillips's "Toussaint L'Ouverture" before his high school assembly. Often naïve in tone, his suggestions simply tell the beginner how to start. Here is one of the most charming: "Another idea, from which people have derived strange benefit, is to enter a room full of people and speak only in answer to a question. Don't try to make conversation, and don't talk at all unless somebody speaks to you. You will find the effect, not only upon others but within yourself, is quite amazing."

Look at Life. Lynwood M. Chace. Knopf. \$3.50.

A COLLECTION of nature photographs made on a Massachusetts farm, divided into "Fur and Four Legs," "Birds All," "Cool-Blooded Ones" and "Monstrous and Mysterious" (insects). The pictures are very well taken technically and many of them are beautiful, especially if you don't think unnaturally close examinations of bugs and reptiles and eggs are sometimes gruesome.

some. The most unusual accomplishment is managing to get some of the wild subjects posed without being dead.

The Negro in Virginia. Writers Program of the WPA. Hastings House. \$2.50.

THE HAMPTON INSTITUTE sponsors this remarkable account of Negro life in Virginia from 1619 to the present day. The most patient research work by Virginia scholars, white and colored, has gone into the preparation of an intensely dramatic story. Physical cruelty in the old slave days was occasional, although the occasions for it were many, but the pagan non-recognition of human personality and spiritual rights held the slave in a system of customs and laws that constituted a permanent cruelty of injustice. No book more than this, in its chapters on slave days, is so brilliant a demonstration of the mystery of man's soul. All was done to turn the slave into an obedient animal, yet the Negro turned that suffering into poetry, into song, into religion, into faithfulness and devotion and courage. The system made family life generally impossible, yet the Negro affirmed, in the pitiful improvisation of "Jumping the Broomstick," a sincere belief in the sanctity of marriage. In these pages there is important material of direct quotation. We would like those who make a habit of telling funny Negro stories to read these literal transcriptions of the Southern Negro's deformation of English speech. They would find that it was equally adapted to tragedy and to poetry. There is a study of modern conditions, interesting photographs, and the book is essential reading for anyone who desires ever, in the presence of a colored man, to have some knowledge of his background.

No Steeper Wall. Percy Marks. Stokes. \$2.50.

A FAIRLY competent author, also responsible for "The Plastic Age," turns out a third-rate novel about an ousted Harvard undergraduate with Boston family trouble who finds maturity, Life, and a brilliant ballet dancer in the mountains of California.

Romantic Rebel. Felizia Seyd. Viking. \$3.00.

THIS study of George Sand and her times is written by a German woman now resident in America. It is sympathetic, easy to read, and less anticlerical than the subject might seem to warrant. Indeed it does very well to give a picture of France and Europe during the middle decades of the last century, decades that seem very remote today, decades when liberty was still a true watchword, when socialism was an utter novelty, when Paris Bohemian life was just crystallizing into that fabulous jewel which shone so brightly before 1914 and which has since lost all its lambency, until it is only a memory. . . . Did the members of the Jockey Club earn their living by riding horses?

The Sculptures of Michelangelo. Oxford. \$3.

SUPPLEMENTING its complete Phaidon Press edition of Michelangelo's paintings, the Oxford University Press has sent its photographer to Rome, Florence, Bologna, Paris, Bruges and London (barely in time) to make new and superbly-lighted photographs, both in the whole and in detail, of the Baroque master's entire sculptural output, including attributions. Another low priced "must" for amateur and professional alike; and a dramatic reminder of the power of the human spirit to transcend national and temporal boundaries.

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ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla., has the distinction of being the first permanent European settlement in the United States. It is also the scene of the establishment of the first Catholic parish in North America. Both events transpired 375 years ago when Pedro Menendez de Aviles, a leading naval commander of his day, reached the harbor on August 28, 1565, and named it for the saint of that day. It was September 8 before he actually took possession and Father Lopez de Mendoza offered the Mass of Our Lady's Nativity on a site afterward called Nombre de Dios. This pioneer settlement comprised 600 Spaniards. For many years the civilian population remained small compared with the various garrisons of 2,000 men. By 1740, however, it aggregated 2,143. And in 1763 the continuity of the Spanish settlement was broken, when Florida came under English rule and the entire Spanish population of the whole colony (5,700) moved away. There was a second Spanish régime from 1783-1821; then the colony became part of the United States.

Today St. Augustine is a picturesque city of some 15,000 inhabitants situated on Matanza Bay and the Florida East Coast Canal. Its winter average temperature of 53 degrees makes it a highly popular winter resort. The semi-tropical vegetation characteristic of the city and its environs adds to the atmosphere of the place. Many of the streets are narrow, a number of the houses quite old and picturesque with their Spanish style architecture of earlier centuries. In the central part of the city are some remains of the old wall built by early settlers to protect them from the Indians. Part of the sea wall which was constructed by the federal government and which serves as a popular promenade, has at its southern extremity the St. Francis barracks, which has risen on the site of an old Spanish monastery. In its early days the city had a stormy history. It was burned by Francis Drake in 1586 and sacked by Captain Davis in 1665. In 1681 it sent out an expedition to attack the English settlement at Port Royal. It drove off attacks by Governor Moore of South Carolina in 1702 and 1704 and withstood an unsuccessful siege of General Oglethorpe of Georgia for 38 days. Even years later during the American Civil War it was twice captured by the Union armies. Much of the old quarter of St. Augustine was destroyed by fire in 1914.

Impressive religious ceremonies marked the observance of the 375th anniversary of this settlement, September 8. Rain prevented the offering of a solemn high pontifical military Mass at Fort Marion as originally planned. It was celebrated at the Cathedral of St. Augustine instead. Archbishop Cicognani, the Apostolic Delegate, was the celebrant and Bishop Walsh of Charleston preached the sermon. Other members of the hierarchy attending included Archbishop Rummel of New Orleans, Bishop Hoban of Rockford, Ill., and Bishop Ledvina of Corpus Christi, Texas. In his sermon Bishop Walsh observed that the Spanish did not exterminate the Indians but rather tried to convert them. He referred to St. Augustine as the "Cradle of the Faith in the New World."

In the discourse he delivered Archbishop Cicognani carried on this idea. Speaking of the first parish established there, His Excellency said: "Its primacy is that of

the spirit. There are today in the United States 18,733 churches, parishes and missions. Certainly there were churches and parishes in the territory that is now the United States before the establishment of the American hierarchy in 1789. They were under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of London, Quebec, Mexico and Cuba. Among all of them, whether founded before or after the establishment of American dioceses, this parish of Saint Augustine is the first example and the model of that unit which is the center of Catholic life and the normal point of contact between Christ and the faithful. . . ."

"How many events, joyful and sad, have taken place within the confines of this parish! . . . These are the treasured and never to be forgotten memories: first of all Baptism, the acquisition of divine sonship and our incorporation in Christ and in the Church. Who can boast of ever in his life having obtained anything of greater value? To understand its importance one need only consider the duties it imposed and the rights it bestowed, the promises and renunciations renewed so often in later life."

"Again what a beautiful memory is Confirmation. What a great event was first Holy Communion with the divine Body of the Lord, the Bread as Life as we are taught. . . . For you married couples another rite was performed at the altar of the parish church, it was the beginning of your home and of your family. Certainly you should often bring to mind that ceremony which sanctified your love, solemnly proclaimed that 'what God hath joined let no man put asunder' and conferred upon you the dignity of consorts and parents. Sad memories too are bound up with our parish. There we gave the last farewell to the mortal remains of our beloved ones; in those sad funeral rites which nevertheless breathed the hope of immortality. . . ."

"Many through hearing of this event will remember once again their own parish and will be stimulated to the performance of good deeds. May there result in all the firm resolution to take an even greater part in parochial life, so that by availing ourselves energetically of its powerful means, they may receive from Mother Church the choicest graces and blessings of heaven."

At the ceremonies a tribute was paid to the late Bishop Barry, fifth Bishop of St. Augustine, who died during the summer. A warm welcome was expressed for his successor, Most Reverend Joseph P. Hurley, now on his way from Rome to take charge of this historic see.

CONTRIBUTORS

- Rev. Joseph H. FICHTER, S.J.*, has been summering on the edge of Mexico; Macmillan is currently publishing his life of Suarez, the last of several books which have come from his active pen.
- Ellen TARRY* mostly lives in Harlem, though this summer she was back in her native South. She is associated with the Baroness de Hueck House of Hospitality for Harlem residents and transients. Her earlier article, "Native Daughter," provoked much attention.
- Emmet LAVERY* also has a book coming out which is described in his article; he was play director of Federal Theatre. Some of his forecasts in this paper have begun to materialize already in the two weeks since it was written.
- Rev. Florence D. COHALAN* is a priest of the New York archdiocese stationed in Staten Island.
- Robert C. FOLLOCK*, who knows Scotland well, teaches philosophy at Fordham University.
- J. G. E. HOPKINS* teaches at Notre Dame of Staten Island College, writes poetry, criticism, short stories.
- Katherine BREGY*, lecturer, author of many books and much poetry, has her headquarters in Philadelphia.
- Theodore MAYNARD* is this fall publishing a life of Queen Elizabeth; he is at work on his history of the Church in the United States.
- Rev. Richard FLOWER, O.S.B.*, is a monk of Saint Gregory's Priory, Portsmouth, R. I.
- Rev. T. Lawason RIGGS* is Catholic chaplain of Yale University.